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25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

Extracts from

## THE FORMULATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF

## UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY

by

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The following extracts are taken from Chapter VIII, Personnel Management, which deals with personnel management, career development, and training concepts relative to a proposed, single Department of Foreign Affairs responsible for the present activities and personnel of the Department of State, ICA, and USIA. The headings and underlining are added, for organization.

### 1. General Personnel Qualifications, Characteristics, Types

In considering the problems of future organization to meet these (foreign policy) requirements it is assumed that there are certain general qualities that are necessary as a foundation for more specialized skills. As always, basic intelligence will be at a premium. Ethical integrity will be essential to withstand the tests of personal values that will arise. Persevering motivation to serve the public cause will be necessary to surmount disheartening trials. A sense of how to get large numbers of people to work together effectively will be important in achieving maximum gain with minimum expenditure of resources. And a broad understanding of, and sensitivity to, different political, economic, and social environments, including one's own, will be essential as a basis for building enduring relations with other nations.

Today's demands for personnel in the major agencies associated with foreign affairs call not only for generalists who have a comprehensive understanding of foreign affairs and are capable of directing and coordinating programs of broad scope but also for experts who can deal with detailed complexities and meet high professional standards in relatively specialized fields. It should be understood, of course,

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that while the so-called generalists are needed to deal with broad areas of policy and operations, they should also have--and usually do have--some specialized skills.

**2. Career Development Concepts** (These follow a detailed discussion of present State, ICA, and USA "foreign service" patterns and practices.)

Because of the need for a unifying framework the emphasis should not be on retreating from a single-service concept but rather on providing more flexible career patterns within that service to meet varying needs. There should be a number of different ladders corresponding to the different skills required, both specialist and generalist. At the same time, officers should be permitted, sometimes encouraged, to cross over from one ladder to another in order to fill the need for various combinations, including general executive talents at the top level.

In support of this concept, the following steps might be taken:

(1) There should be continuing review of present and future requirements, and of methods to meet these needs. (2) Foreign Service examinations should be designed so that potential generalists will not be penalized, but with an opportunity for a limited number of specialists to be selected each year through similar but somewhat differently organized examinations. If the Foreign Service is to staff a wide area of operational and specialized program posts in the future, it cannot hope to select talented young blood to fill these positions by a single examination. (3) Specialists should be developed within the Foreign Service wherever possible, and inservice training should be provided to retool and maintain expertise during a specialist's career. (4) Personnel assigned to specialist positions should be given longer tours of duty where this seems necessary and feasible. (5) Opportunities for a service at the rank of Career Minister should be available in many special fields with no prejudice against promotion of specialists to this rank. (6) Lateral entry into the Foreign Service or appointments in the Foreign Service Reserve should be made as necessary, but should not be regarded as the major means of acquiring specialists. Requirements for such lateral entry should be flexible and realistic, free of unnecessary limitations.

**3. Training.** (This report recommends that a desirable training goal should be 11% of the individual's total career service, or one out of every nine years in service.)

**At what stages in the careers of Foreign Service Officers should inservice training be provided? Among the alternative levels at which full-time inservice training might be given are the following, roughly in steppingstone order through a career:**

- (1) Basic orientation course following induction.**
- (2) Rotational on-the-job experience in Washington as a first working assignment.**
- (3) Specialized area and language training before assignment to a foreign country for the first time, if needed.**
- (4) Training in the performance of a specific functional task before assignment to duty. This might occur at several stages.**
- (5) Rotational on-the-job experiences within an Embassy on first assignment overseas.**
- (6) Rotational on-the-job experience in one or more other agencies early in career. This might also occur at later stages.**
- (7) Additional formal training, possibly at a university, after a probationary period of no more than five years.**
- (8) "Midcareer" training involving Foreign Service officers and representatives of other agencies.**
- (9) Training in the Foreign Service Institute senior officer course or its equivalent.**
- (10) Training at the National War College or some other advanced interdepartmental training school.**

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**There are several possible bases for determining who should receive midcareer and senior training: (1) only outstanding officers at each level might be selected for training; (2) all officers might be trained at midcareer and a high percentage might receive senior training; or (3) officers might be selected for training on the basis of need for improvement, with average or below officers being given preference.**

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With an effective promotion-up, selection-out system, there would be little advantage to be gained by adopting the third course based on need for improvement. In practice, few have been "selected out" of the Foreign Service. Thus a good case can be made for giving training to all officers at midcareer because few are likely to be selected out before a number of years of additional service. Senior officers are serving and will serve in such important posts that the benefits they may derive from training will have considerable impact upon the conduct of foreign policy. Those with more than five years ahead before retirement should probably be assigned senior level training. To meet future needs, therefore, the second approach appears most attractive: to give all officers midcareer training and a high percentage senior training.

In addition to general participation in the orientation, midcareer, and senior officer courses, Foreign Service officers should be assigned to language, area, functional, and other training courses on the basis of the training prerequisites for positions to which they are assigned. This would require explicit designation of the training prerequisites for all positions...

The need for language and area training is particularly acute...

#### 4. Career Management and Selection Out

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Selection out during a person's later years may be less necessary if methods of initial selection are further refined and if some pruning is done during a probationary period of about five years.

With the increasing training needs of the Foreign Service and with additional funds required for the education of each individual officer, application of the promotion-up, selection-out process in the later stages of a career may become too wasteful to continue. Older officers may perform many lower level jobs more ably and be more satisfied doing them than younger men on their way up the promotion ladder. If promotion were not a requirement for remaining in the Foreign Service, officers might display a bit more independence of thought and be less afraid to present original ideas. In a mature personnel system, the "flood" remains open for rapid promotion of outstanding young men without application of the selection-out principle. Separation for cause would still be possible and could be administered in such a way as to

eliminate personnel unfit for further service. While the importance of selection-out is recognized, far more important is emphasis on good recruitment and career development.